

**ABSTRACT**

5 An access control system (10) is disclosed for controlling access to data stored on at  
least one data storage medium (14) of a computing system. The access control system  
(10) comprises authentication means (25) to authenticate users permitted to access data  
stored in the at least one data storage medium (14) and database means (29) arranged to  
store data access profiles. Each data access profile is associated with a user permitted  
to access data stored in the at least one data storage medium (14), each data access  
10 profile includes information indicative of the degree of access permitted by a user to  
data stored in the at least one data storage medium (14), and each data access profile  
includes a master data access profile (M) and a current data access profile (C). The  
current data access profile (C) is modifiable within parameters defined by the master  
data access profile (M).

15